

The Indiana Dept. Of Veterans' Affairs Update

Medal of Honor
Memorial

Mitch Daniels - Governor
Tom Applegate - Director

December 2011

The Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs Newsletter

Edition 2011-5



Director's Comments

New License Plates Unveiled on November 9th at Indiana War Memorial

Continued cooperation between the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA) and the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) resulted in a new and improved Hoosier Veteran License Plate. The Army had been the only holdout for the use of their logo on the license plate but they finally relented and let us use the Army logo. Instead of the crossed flags, the veteran will be able to designate in which branch of the military they served and will have that service seal (logo) on their Hoosier Veteran plate. This will replace the sticker which spelled out the branch of service. We're very happy Frank

Owens with the BMV refused to give up and was able to get this accomplished. All holders of the current Hoosier Veteran license plate will convert to the new plates in 2012. Persons who have low digit plates should contact me with details concerning which new plate and low digits they wish for next year. The plates go on sale in every license branch on January 1st, 2012.



Veteran Designation on Driver's License

Also new for 2012 is the opportunity for veterans to have a veteran logo on the back of their driver's license. This unique feature effectively makes the Indiana Driver's License also a veteran's identification card. The new driver's license should be sufficient proof for veterans to receive veteran discounts during sales such as those on Veteran's Day, Armed Forces Day, etc. There is no additional charge to get the veteran designation on the back of the driver's license.



*Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year*

The Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs and the State Approving Agency wish readers a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We are honored to have served Hoosier veterans for another year and eagerly look forward to 2012.

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Guardsmen's quick response saves lives.

By Sgt. Lorne Neff, Indiana National Guard

INDIANAPOLIS - Two Indiana National Guard Soldiers helped save the lives of more than twenty people on a September evening when the apartment across from where they live went up in flames.

Specialist Michael Conley was working on his truck around 7 p.m., in front of his apartment when he heard his neighbor scream from the pool behind him. At the same time, his roommate, Spc. Caleb Goldsberry, drove up returning from the store. Both went running towards the fire.

"You're trying to get there as fast as you can; do as much as you can," said Goldsberry. "So you've got the fear of failing, but you've got the determination to not fail because you know what's on the line. And that would be other people's lives."

Most other people were unaware, contently sitting in their apartment, said Conley

"(I can) pretty much say nobody gave me any static about getting out of their apartment. At that point in time, my adrenalin was rushing about 99 percent, I came into the apartment screaming, they didn't argue with me much," said Conley.

"Everybody wants to grab their mom's purse or little trinkets," said Goldsberry. "That stuff's nice to have and yeah it might be really important to you, but it's not worth your life!"

The two ran from apartment to apartment. After they were sure everyone was out, the two Soldiers, their clothes blackened from the smoke and soot, joined the bystanders outside while the firefighters fought to contain the blaze.

"That's when everyone started thanking me," said Conley "It was humbling, but at the same time, I felt a little weirded out by it, because to me this had to be done."

"I don't consider myself a hero or anything like that," added Goldsberry. "I just feel like I did my job with some overtime."



Two Indiana Guardsmen helped save the lives of more than 20 people on a September evening when the apartment across from where they live went up in flames. Spc. Michael Conley and Spc. Caleb Goldsberry of the 384th Military Police Company, Bloomington, Ind., acted quickly and attribute their quick action to their National Guard training. (Photo by Spc. Caleb Goldsberry, Indiana National Guard)

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Both Guardsmen belong to the 384th Military Police Company, headquartered in Bloomington, Ind. The two Guard Soldiers have deployed to Iraq and were in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake.

“I think being in the Army National Guard and being an MP made me more willing to go into a situation where it could end up badly for me physically; I think it prepared me mentally more than anything,” said Conley of his military police training and experience.

“I’m glad that I’ve had the training I’ve had,” said Goldberry. “I’m glad I’m a Soldier. If I wasn’t, I doubt would have responded the same way.”



Spc. Caleb Goldberry, 384th Military Police Company, Indiana National Guard, helped save the lives of more than twenty people on a September evening when the apartment across from where they live went up in flames. (Photo by Spc. Sgt. Lorne Neff, Indiana National Guard)

The Soldiers’ commander praised their actions for helping their neighbors avert disaster.

“We talk to these Soldiers about living the Army values...and we actually have people who truly live those values every day of their life, not just when they’re on duty with the National Guard,” said Capt. Jesse Carlton, 384th MP Company commander. “I was very proud of them. It was in the line of duty of being a citizen-Soldier, and I couldn’t stop smiling. It was great.”

As a result of their actions, nobody was hurt in the fire and according to Carlton; the two could be up for an award for their actions.



Spc. Michael Conley, 384th Military Police Company, Indiana National Guard, helped save the lives of more than twenty people on a September evening when the apartment across from where they live went up in flames. (Photo by Spc. Sgt. Lorne Neff, Indiana National Guard)



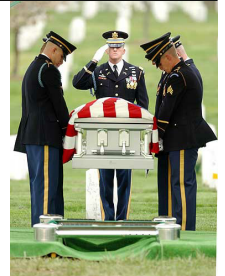
As of 29 November 2011, Indiana had 1,836 men and women deployed from the Army National Guard and Army Reserve for Operation Noble Eagle, Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation New Dawn.

Since 9/11/2001 18,722 Hoosiers have been mobilized for the Global War on Terror and another 3,573 for domestic missions, for a total of 22,295 deployments.



The Indiana Operation Enduring Freedom/ Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation New Dawn Memorial Wall

Indiana has sustained the following casualties since the last
IDVA Update, bringing the total for Indiana to 186



United States Army Specialist **James A. Butz**, 21, of Porter, Indiana.

Died on September 29, 2011, in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. According to initial reports, Specialist Butz died of injuries sustained on September 28, 2011, when an improvised explosive device detonated near his patrol.

Specialist Butz was assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

He is a 2009 graduate of Chesterton High School and joined the Army in July of that year.



United States Army Specialist **Ricardo Cerros, Jr.**, 24, of Salinas, California; mother, Gary, Indiana.

Died on October 8, 2011, in Logar Province, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. According to initial reports, Specialist Cerros died of injuries sustained when he received small arms fire while conducting combat operations.

He was assigned to B Company, 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington.

He enlisted in the Army in July 2010 and joined the Rangers in March of this year.





Parking at Stout Field for Roudebush VA Medical Center to Close

Plenty of spaces are available for patients at Lafayette Road location, and the free shuttle is less than a 10 minute ride.

Article from the VA web site

That “P” word: parking. Large organizations worldwide have parking challenges. There are lots of creative solutions - many of them simply patches - which organizations employ to meet the challenges.

The Indianapolis VA Medical Center is meeting these challenges head on.

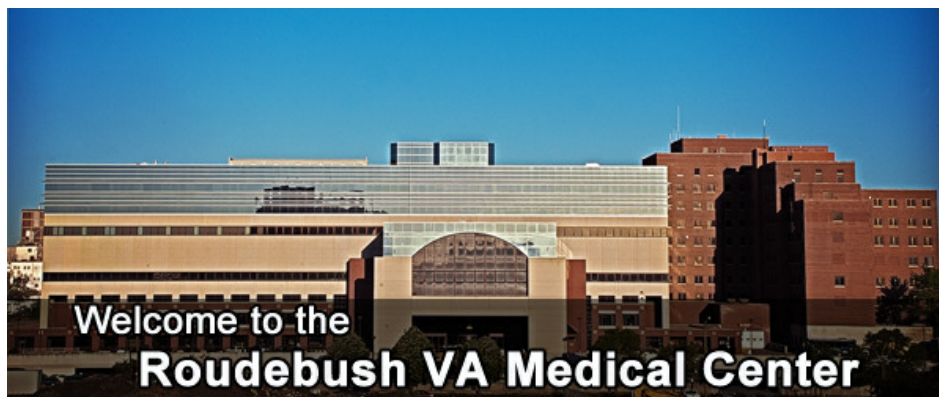
In Sept of 2010, we borrowed some parking spaces at Stout Field, and began shuttling both employees and patients from that location and from another parking lot on Cold Spring Road. Since then, we nearly doubled our [offsite parking spaces](#) when we added our Lafayette Road location.

On October 1, employee/patient parking will no longer be available at the Stout Field location. There are plenty of spaces at both Cold Spring Road and Lafayette Road.

Patients are encouraged to [view this map](#) to determine which offsite location would work best for them. Our modern shuttle service, which includes handicap accessibility, is free to patients. Some commuters report that it takes far less time to park at one of these locations than to find parking on the medical center campus. We encourage patients to allow at least one half hour prior to the check-in time of their appointment.

As we work through parking challenges, the goal of the Indianapolis VA Medical Center will be to ensure great care for YOU, our Hoosier Heroes, and do our best to communicate with you. Please be patient as we work through this time. [Let us know how we are doing](#).

Article from the VA web site



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Clinic for Returning Service Members

VA News Release

The nation's long conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan have created a new generation of Veterans who have "borne the battle". Hundreds of thousands of these brave warriors have returned home and the nation has recognized the need to meet their health care challenges.

The VA has created a comprehensive Seamless Transition program for these Veterans, and Indianapolis recently opened a new clinic specifically configured to meet their unique needs.

The Seamless Transition Integrated Care Clinic (STICC) is more than just 12,000 square feet of beautiful new space. The STICC is home to approximately thirty (30) VA team members as well as professional partners from the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), Army Wounded Warrior Program, and Indiana State Vocational Rehabilitation Services. In addition to our co-located interdisciplinary treatment services, other special programming within the STICC includes workshops by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, Vet-to-Vet Peer Groups and other new initiatives coming online soon.

Returning service members who served in combat within the past 5 years should be using their enhanced combat veteran eligibility with the VA Healthcare System. Over 10,000 Veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan have already used services at the Indianapolis VA Medical Center, but many returning Veterans are still unaware of these extensive services available to them.

The STICC is designed to be your first stop to join the VA family! Visit our web site at <http://www.indianapolis.va.gov/freedom.asp> to learn more.

By Indianapolis Office of Communications



U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Joe Jackson hugs his son during a homecoming ceremony from an OEF/OIF deployment in 2009. DoD photo by Senior Airman Marc I. Lane, USAF)



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Mandatory Use by VA Beneficiaries of Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) System or Direct Express Debit Master Card

Effective from May 1, 2011, **all new VA beneficiaries** are being instructed to receive payment via EFT or pre-paid debit card. **Effective March 1, 2013, all remaining recipients** of Veterans Benefits Administration paper checks will be identified and contacted directly by the Treasury Department. If [the veteran is] currently receiving VA funds by paper check, [they] may call [the] VA toll free telephone line at 1-800-827-1000 with [their] bank information for having future payments paid via direct deposit. To have [their] federal benefits issued through Direct Express Debit Master Card issued by Comerica Bank [they can] call 1-888-213-1625 to enroll in the program.

From The American Legion Service & Legislative Update 10-30-11

New Videos Feature Military Service Stories of Women Veterans

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs has released a series of videos in which women Veterans describe their experiences serving in the military, ranging from their significant contributions to national safety and security to the challenges they faced during their service and after returning to civilian life.

“These videos show the important contributions women have made to this country through their military service,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “Women Veterans have earned the respect of a grateful Nation for their tremendous service and sacrifice.”

The three- to five-minute videos are part of VA’s ongoing “Rethink Veterans” campaign to increase awareness of women Veterans and their vital roles in our nation’s history. The videos can be viewed at www.womenshealth.va.gov or on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/VeteransHealthAdmin>.

The four stories just released were recorded during the July 2011 Women Veterans Summit in Washington, D.C. Women from all eras, conflicts, and service branches were invited to share their experiences. VA plans to release several video vignettes over the next few months.

The first four videos include an Army Reservist who served nine years stateside before deploying to Iraq post-9/11, a Vietnam War era nurse who returned from combat with a new sense of family, a Navy Veteran who advocates for expanded roles for women in the military, and Brigadier General Wilma Vaught, the first woman to deploy with a Strategic Air Command bomber unit. The videos are meant to increase awareness of women’s roles in the military among VA staff and the public.

“We’re challenging people to rethink preconceived notions about who is a Veteran, what a Veteran looks like, and what a woman Veteran may have done or experienced while serving,” said Dr. Patricia Hayes, chief consultant of VA’s Women Veterans Health Strategic Health Care Group. “Getting this message across, both inside and outside VA, is important so that women Veterans receive the respect, recognition, and care they deserve.”

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Women Veterans make up 1 percent of Veterans, 15 percent of active duty service members and nearly 18 percent of guard and reserve forces. As the number of active duty women increases, so does the number of women Veterans using their VA benefits. VA is working to enhance access and services for women Veterans at all VA facilities and change VA culture to be more understanding and accommodating of women Veterans.

In addition to the videos, VA recently released a 60-second public service announcement (PSA) about women in the military. The PSA is available for viewing on YouTube:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_profilepage&v=BOP5DCgixPE and www.womenshealth.va.gov. Broadcast organizations interested in obtaining a broadcast-quality version of the PSA should contact VA's Office of Public Affairs (202-461-7600).

For more information about VA programs and services for women Veterans, please visit: www.va.gov/womenvet and www.womenshealth.va.gov

From a VA News Release dated December 5, 2011.

Traumatic Injury Benefits Now Payable for Genitourinary Injuries ***TSGLI Payments Will Be Made for Qualifying Servicemembers***

WASHINGTON – Servicemembers who suffer severe injuries to the genitourinary organs will now be eligible for Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance Traumatic Injury Protection, or TSGLI.

"We recognize that these types of injuries are devastating and can have a long-lasting impact on the Servicemember's quality of life," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "It is for this reason that it is appropriate to include genitourinary injuries in the list of payable losses specified in the TSGLI program."

Military doctors reported seeing an increase in these types of injuries, many of which are the result of the nature of current warfare and the use of improvised explosive devices, or IEDs, by enemy combatants.

TSGLI provides a one-time payment to Servicemembers sustaining certain severe traumatic injuries resulting in a range of losses, including amputations; limb salvage; paralysis; burns; loss of sight, and other traumatic losses. Genitourinary injuries for male and female Servicemembers, are being added to the TSGLI schedule of covered losses.

VA also provides health care for genitourinary problems, along with disability compensation for cases of service-related injuries or illnesses involving genitourinary organs.

The first payments for genitourinary losses will be made to eligible Servicemembers and Veterans on Dec. 2, eligibility for these new losses will be retroactive to injuries incurred on or after Oct. 7, 2001, the beginning of the Global War On Terror.

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For more information on all of the TSGLI eligibility requirements, or to apply for a TSGLI payment, Service-members and Veterans should go to <http://www.insurance.va.gov/sgliSite/TSGLI/TSGLI.htm> or contact their branch of service TSGLI Office (contact information available at above link).

From VA News Release dated December 2, 2011.

News for Military Retirees

Military retirees will be receiving some extra documents in their end-of-year mailing from the Defense Finance and Accounting Service. DFAS officials state that every piece of paper in the mailing is important and will help retirees manage their pay matters through the tax season and beyond. Included in the mailing will be:

- A Retiree Account Statement dated Dec. 2 showing the new payment amount as of Dec. 30. This includes the cost-of-living allowance adjustment for 2012.
- A Retiree Account Statement dated Dec. 12 showing the new payment amount as of Feb. 1. This includes any federal income tax adjustments caused by changes to the 2012 tax tables.
- Internal Revenue Service Form 1099-R reflecting all payments retirees received in 2011. DFAS officials remind retirees that because of the pay date change approved by Congress earlier this year, the 1099-R will reflect 13 payments rather than 12.
- The DFAS retiree newsletter including important updates from retired and annuitant pay officials, as well as information about tools people can use to manage their retired pay account year round.

For people with online myPay accounts, the statements will be posted Dec. 4, and the 1099-Rs will be posted Dec. 15. For people who get these documents via the U.S. Postal Service, DFAS official will mail these documents to retirees Dec. 19 through Jan. 10.

The Annuitant Account Statements and 1099-Rs will be available Dec. 14 on myPay. Annuitants who get these documents via mail can expect to receive them Dec. 19 through 31.

Retirees and annuitants must keep their contact information current, according to DFAS officials who say the top reason a retiree or annuitant doesn't receive their 1099-R is because it is sent to an old address.

If a retiree or annuitant does not have their correct address on file with DFAS by Dec. 5, they will experience a significant delay in receiving their end of year documents, said official. People who do not have an active myPay account must call, mail or fax a written request to DFAS-Cleveland; processing a change of address and reissuing a new 1099-R takes at least 30 days, said officials.



Retirees and annuitants with an active myPay account can decrease their wait time for an address change and new 1099-R by logging in and updating their own account. Changes take effect in three to five business days, and a copy of their 1099R can be printed directly from myPay.

For more information about account maintenance, 1099-R requests, and logging in to myPay visit the DFAS website at www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary.html. People without an online account can contact DFAS at 800-321-1080.

For more Air Force retiree news and information, please visit www.retirees.af.mil.

From CLEVELAND (AFRNS) – Release No. 12-02-11 dated Dec. 1, 2011

POSITIONS OPEN AT ST. VINCENT HEALTH

The following is taken, with permission, from the St. Vincent web site.

St. Vincent Health is one of the largest employers in the state of Indiana with more than 13,000 associates, meaning whatever your specialization and whatever your professional goals the sky is the limit.

St. Vincent Health has been serving the health care needs of Indiana residents for more than 126 years. Our health ministry consists of 20 facilities, with a direct presence in 46 Indiana counties. The system is comprised of one quaternary facility, three tertiary hospitals, six critical access hospitals, six specialty hospitals, several joint venture partners and clinical affiliates.

A philosophy of strong partnerships with businesses, communities, physicians, associates and others is regarded by St. Vincent Health as essential to improving the health status of Hoosiers.

As advocates for a healthier society, we have developed strong partnerships with communities and individuals who share compatible values. We believe that health care should be kept local, which is why we have extended our reach beyond urban areas such as Indianapolis, Kokomo, and Anderson, and into rural communities where health services are often scarce.

Please visit our web site to search and apply for opportunities of interest at www.stvincent.org/jobs. St. Vincent Health is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

